

Senate Bill No. 1243

CHAPTER 395

An act to amend Sections 101.7, 149, 201, 312, 4800, 4804.5, 4836.2, 4841.5, 4844, 11506, and 22259 of, and to add Sections 154.1, 211, and 312.1 to, the Business and Professions Code, relating to professions and vocations.

[Approved by Governor September 17, 2014. Filed with
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LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1243, Lieu. Professions and vocations.

(1) Under existing law, the Department of Consumer Affairs is comprised of various boards, bureaus, commissions, committees, and similarly constituted agencies that license and regulate the practice of various professions and vocations. Existing law requires those agencies to hold public meetings and provide public notice of a meeting.

This bill would require each of those agencies to offer a person requesting to receive notice of a meeting the option to receive that notice by regular mail, email, or both regular mail and email, and would require the agency to comply with that request. The bill would require an agency that intends to Web cast a meeting, to provide notice of intent to Web cast the meeting.

(2) Existing law authorizes certain agencies within the department, upon investigation and with probable cause to believe that a person is advertising in a telephone directory with respect to the offering or performance of services, without being properly licensed by or registered with the agency, to issue a citation including an order of correction. Existing law authorizes those agencies to notify the Public Utilities Commission if a person does not comply with a final order of correction, and requires the commission to require the telephone corporation providing the telephone services to disconnect the service.

This bill would apply those provisions to all agencies that comprise the department, and would delete the requirement that the advertising appear in a telephone directory.

(3) Existing law imposes specified duties on the department and allows the department to levy a charge for the estimated administrative expenses in advance on a pro rata share basis against funds of an agency comprising the department.

This bill would require the department to submit an annual report of the accounting of the pro rata calculation of administrative expenses to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature, on or before July 1, 2015, and on or before July 1 of each subsequent year. The bill would require the department to conduct a one-time study of its system for prorating

administrative excesses, and to include the findings of the study in the report it is required to submit on or before July 1, 2015. The bill would also require the department, if it engages a third-party consultant to assess the department's operations, to promptly, upon receipt of the consultant's final report on that assessment, submit that report to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature including the entire study upon its completion.

The bill would require the department to develop and make available training courses for employees who perform enforcement functions to develop knowledge of enforcement practices for all employees who perform enforcement functions.

(4) Existing law requires an agency comprising the department to investigate a consumer accusation or complaint against a licensee and, where appropriate, the agency is authorized to impose disciplinary action against a licensee. Under existing law, an agency comprising the department may refer a complaint to the Attorney General or Office of Administrative Hearings for further action. Existing law requires the Director of Consumer Affairs to submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature, on or before January 1, that includes information regarding consumer complaints and the action taken on those complaints.

This bill would require the director's report to include specific, detailed information regarding those complaints and actions. The bill would require the Office of Administrative Hearings to submit a report to the department, the Governor, and the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature, on or before January 1, 2016, and on or before January 1 of each subsequent year, that includes specified information regarding the actions taken by the Office of Administrative Hearings pertaining to accusations and cases relating to consumer complaints against a person whose profession or vocation is licensed by an agency comprising the department.

(5) Existing law regulates the practice of veterinary medicine. Existing law, until January 1, 2016, provides for a Veterinary Medical Board within the Department of Consumer Affairs. Existing law, until January 1, 2016, authorizes the board to appoint a person exempt from civil service to be designated as an executive officer of the board, as specified.

This bill would extend those provisions until January 1, 2017.

(6) Existing law, beginning January 1, 2015, requires a veterinary assistant to obtain a controlled substance permit from the board in order to administer a controlled substance, and requires the board to revoke a veterinary controlled substance permit upon notification that the veterinary assistant has been convicted of a state or federal felony controlled substance violation.

This bill would, instead, beginning July 1, 2015, authorize the board to deny, suspend, or revoke the controlled substance permit of a veterinary assistant after notice and hearing if the veterinary assistant has been convicted of a state or federal felony controlled substance violation.

(7) Existing law regulates the practice of common interest development managers, and makes those provisions effective only until January 1, 2015.

This bill would extend the effectiveness of those provisions until January 1, 2019, and subject those provisions to review by the appropriate policy

committees of the Legislature. The bill would also delete an obsolete reference.

(8) Existing law establishes the California Tax Education Council, a nonprofit organization, and requires the council to register and regulate tax preparers. Existing law makes those provisions effective only until January 1, 2015.

This bill would extend the effectiveness of those provisions until January 1, 2019.

(9) This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive, and conforming changes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 101.7 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

101.7. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, boards shall meet at least three times each calendar year. Boards shall meet at least once each calendar year in northern California and once each calendar year in southern California in order to facilitate participation by the public and its licensees.

(b) The director at his or her discretion may exempt any board from the requirement in subdivision (a) upon a showing of good cause that the board is not able to meet at least three times in a calendar year.

(c) The director may call for a special meeting of the board when a board is not fulfilling its duties.

(d) An agency within the department that is required to provide a written notice pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 11125 of the Government Code, may provide that notice by regular mail, email, or by both regular mail and email. An agency shall give a person who requests a notice the option of receiving the notice by regular mail, email, or by both regular mail and email. The agency shall comply with the requester's chosen form or forms of notice.

(e) An agency that plans to Web cast a meeting shall include in the meeting notice required pursuant to subdivision (a) of Section 11125 of the Government Code a statement of the board's intent to Web cast the meeting. An agency may Web cast a meeting even if the agency fails to include that statement of intent in the notice.

SEC. 2. Section 149 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

149. (a) If, upon investigation, an agency designated in Section 101 has probable cause to believe that a person is advertising with respect to the offering or performance of services, without being properly licensed by or registered with the agency to offer or perform those services, the agency may issue a citation under Section 148 containing an order of correction that requires the violator to do both of the following:

(1) Cease the unlawful advertising.

(2) Notify the telephone company furnishing services to the violator to disconnect the telephone service furnished to any telephone number contained in the unlawful advertising.

(b) This action is stayed if the person to whom a citation is issued under subdivision (a) notifies the agency in writing that he or she intends to contest the citation. The agency shall afford an opportunity for a hearing, as specified in Section 125.9.

(c) If the person to whom a citation and order of correction is issued under subdivision (a) fails to comply with the order of correction after that order is final, the agency shall inform the Public Utilities Commission of the violation and the Public Utilities Commission shall require the telephone corporation furnishing services to that person to disconnect the telephone service furnished to any telephone number contained in the unlawful advertising.

(d) The good faith compliance by a telephone corporation with an order of the Public Utilities Commission to terminate service issued pursuant to this section shall constitute a complete defense to any civil or criminal action brought against the telephone corporation arising from the termination of service.

SEC. 3. Section 154.1 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

154.1. (a) The Legislature hereby finds and declares all of the following:

(1) The department is currently providing opportunities for employees of agencies comprising the department who perform enforcement functions to attend an entry level enforcement academy.

(2) It is in the best interest of consumers in the state for the department to continue to provide ongoing training opportunities for employees performing enforcement functions for each agency comprising the department.

(b) The department shall continue to develop and make available training courses for employees who perform enforcement functions. The purpose of the training courses is to develop knowledge of enforcement practices for all employees who perform enforcement functions. The department shall encourage an agency executive officer, registrar, executive director, bureau chief, enforcement manager, supervisor, or staff member to attend enforcement training courses.

(c) The department shall develop the enforcement training curricula in consultation and cooperation with the office of the Attorney General and the Office of Administrative Hearings.

SEC. 4. Section 201 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

201. (a) (1) A charge for the estimated administrative expenses of the department, not to exceed the available balance in any appropriation for any one fiscal year, may be levied in advance on a pro rata share basis against any of the boards, bureaus, commissions, divisions, and agencies, at the discretion of the director and with the approval of the Department of Finance.

(2) The department shall submit a report of the accounting of the pro rata calculation of administrative expenses to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature on or before July 1, 2015, and on or before July 1 of each subsequent year.

(b) The department shall conduct a one-time study of its current system for prorating administrative expenses to determine if that system is the most productive, efficient, and cost-effective manner for the department and the agencies comprising the department. The study shall include consideration of whether some of the administrative services offered by the department should be outsourced or charged on an as-needed basis and whether the agencies should be permitted to elect not to receive and be charged for certain administrative services. The department shall include the findings in its report pursuant to paragraph (2) of subdivision (a) that it is required to submit on or before July 1, 2015.

SEC. 5. Section 211 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

211. If the department hires a third-party consultant to assess the department's operations, the department shall, promptly upon receipt of the consultant's final report on that assessment, submit that report to the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature after omitting any information that is not subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act (Chapter 3.5 commencing with Section 6250) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code.

SEC. 6. Section 312 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

312. (a) The director shall submit to the Governor and the Legislature on or before January 1, 2003, and annually thereafter, a report of programmatic and statistical information regarding the activities of the department and its constituent entities for the previous fiscal year. The report shall include information concerning the director's activities pursuant to Section 326, including the number and general patterns of consumer complaints and the action taken on those complaints.

(b) The report shall include information relative to the performance of each constituent entity, including, but not limited to, length of time for a constituent entity to reach each of the following milestones in the enforcement process:

(1) Average number of days from when a constituent entity receives a complaint until the constituent entity assigns an investigator to the complaint.

(2) Average number of days from a constituent entity opening an investigation conducted by the constituent entity staff or the Division of Investigation to closing the investigation regardless of outcome.

(3) Average number of days from a constituent entity closing an investigation to imposing formal discipline.

(c) A report submitted pursuant to subdivision (a) shall be submitted in compliance with Section 9795 of the Government Code.

SEC. 7. Section 312.1 is added to the Business and Professions Code, to read:

312.1. The Office of Administrative Hearings shall submit a report to the department, the Governor, and the Legislature on or before January 1, 2016, and on or before January 1 of each subsequent year that includes, at a minimum, all of the following for the previous fiscal year:

(a) Number of cases referred by each constituent entity to each office of the Office of Administrative Hearings for a hearing.

(b) Average number of days from receiving a request to setting a hearing date at each office of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

(c) Average number of days from setting a hearing to conducting the hearing.

(d) Average number of days after conducting a hearing to transmitting the proposed decision by each office of the Office of Administrative Hearings.

SEC. 8. Section 4800 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4800. (a) There is in the Department of Consumer Affairs a Veterinary Medical Board in which the administration of this chapter is vested. The board consists of the following members:

(1) Four licensed veterinarians.

(2) One registered veterinary technician.

(3) Three public members.

(b) This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2017, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2017, deletes or extends that date.

(c) Notwithstanding any other law, the repeal of this section renders the board subject to review by the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature. However, the review of the board shall be limited to those issues identified by the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature and shall not involve the preparation or submission of a sunset review document or evaluative questionnaire.

SEC. 9. Section 4804.5 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4804.5. The board may appoint a person exempt from civil service who shall be designated as an executive officer and who shall exercise the powers and perform the duties delegated by the board and vested in him or her by this chapter.

This section shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2017, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2017, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 10. Section 4836.2 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4836.2. (a) Applications for a veterinary assistant controlled substance permit shall be upon a form furnished by the board.

(b) The fee for filing an application for a veterinary assistant controlled substance permit shall be set by the board in an amount the board determines is reasonably necessary to provide sufficient funds to carry out the purposes of this section, not to exceed one hundred dollars (\$100).

(c) The board may deny, suspend, or revoke the controlled substance permit of a veterinary assistant after notice and hearing for any cause provided in this subdivision. The proceedings under this section shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions for administrative adjudication in Chapter 5 (commencing with Section 11500) of Part 1 of Division 3 of Title 2 of the Government Code, and the board shall have all the powers granted therein. The board may revoke or suspend a veterinary assistant controlled substance permit for any of the following reasons:

(1) The employment of fraud, misrepresentation, or deception in obtaining a veterinary assistant controlled substance permit.

(2) Chronic inebriety or habitual use of controlled substances.

(3) The veterinary assistant to whom the permit is issued has been convicted of a state or federal felony controlled substance violation.

(4) Violating or attempts to violate, directly or indirectly, or assisting in or abetting the violation of, or conspiring to violate, any provision of this chapter, or of the regulations adopted under this chapter.

(d) The board shall not issue a veterinary assistant controlled substance permit to any applicant with a state or federal felony controlled substance conviction.

(e) (1) As part of the application for a veterinary assistant controlled substance permit, the applicant shall submit to the Department of Justice fingerprint images and related information, as required by the Department of Justice for all veterinary assistant applicants, for the purposes of obtaining information as to the existence and content of a record of state or federal convictions and state or federal arrests and information as to the existence and content of a record of state or federal arrests for which the Department of Justice establishes that the person is free on bail or on his or her own recognizance pending trial or appeal.

(2) When received, the Department of Justice shall forward to the Federal Bureau of Investigation requests for federal summary criminal history information that it receives pursuant to this section. The Department of Justice shall review any information returned to it from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and compile and disseminate a response to the board summarizing that information.

(3) The Department of Justice shall provide a state or federal level response to the board pursuant to paragraph (1) of subdivision (p) of Section 11105 of the Penal Code.

(4) The Department of Justice shall charge a reasonable fee sufficient to cover the cost of processing the request described in this subdivision.

(f) The board shall request from the Department of Justice subsequent notification service, as provided pursuant to Section 11105.2 of the Penal Code, for persons described in paragraph (1) of subdivision (e).

(g) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2015.

SEC. 11. Section 4841.5 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4841.5. To be eligible to take the written and practical examination for registration as a registered veterinary technician, the applicant shall:

(a) Be at least 18 years of age.

(b) (1) Furnish satisfactory evidence of graduation from, at minimum, a two-year curriculum in veterinary technology, in a college or other postsecondary institution approved by the board, or the equivalent thereof as determined by the board. In the case of a private postsecondary institution, the institution shall also be approved by the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education.

(2) For purposes of this subdivision, education or a combination of education and clinical practice experience may constitute the equivalent of the graduation requirement imposed under this subdivision, as determined by the board.

SEC. 12. Section 4844 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

4844. A person who fails to renew his certificate of registration within five years after its expiration may not renew it, and it shall not be restored, reissued, or reinstated thereafter, but that person may apply for and obtain a new certificate of registration if:

(a) He or she is not subject to denial of registration under Section 480.

(b) No fact, circumstance, or condition exists which, if the certificate of registration were issued, would justify its revocation or suspension.

(c) He or she takes and passes the examination, if any, that would be required of him or her if he or she were then applying for a certificate of registration for the first time, or otherwise establishes to the satisfaction of the board that, with due regard for the public interest, he or she is qualified to be a registered veterinary technician.

(d) He or she pays all of the fees that would be required of him or her if he or she were applying for the certificate of registration for the first time.

The board may, by regulation, provide for the waiver or refund of all or any part of the examination fee when a certificate of registration is issued without an examination pursuant to this section.

SEC. 13. Section 11506 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

11506. This part shall be subject to review by the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature. This part shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 14. Section 22259 of the Business and Professions Code is amended to read:

22259. (a) This chapter shall be subject to review by the appropriate policy committees of the Legislature.

(b) This chapter shall remain in effect only until January 1, 2019, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before January 1, 2019, deletes or extends that date.